

February 25, 2023

Written testimony submitted to the Connecticut General Assembly Housing Committee
in support of SB 4, *An Act Concerning Connecticut's Present and Future Housing Needs*.

Dear Representative Luxenberg, Senator Moore, and members of the Housing Committee:

My name is William Marut. I am a resident of Glastonbury and a member of Hartford Religious Society of Friends (Quakers). My congregation is a member of the Greater Hartford Interfaith Action Alliance (GHIAA), a broad-based organization of 49 faith institutions working together on this issue.

I am testifying **in support of** a rent cap and **in support of SB 4**, with these amendments added to better protect tenants:

- A rent cap of no more than 3%.
- Coverage in between tenants, so landlords can't push out tenants to increase rent.
- Expand good-cause eviction protections so tenants have security in their homes and can't be evicted for no reason.

I support this bill because it is the right and just thing to do, but also because it is the smart thing to do for Connecticut. So many of the people suffering massive rent increases are doing so at the hands of out-of-state investors and owners. Failing to address this crisis will not only hurt our residents, but it will also weaken our state.

Other reasons I support SB 4

- Connecticut's average rent increase in the last two years is 20%.
- 50% of all Connecticut renters already pay over 30% of their gross monthly income on housing, compared with just 30% of homeowners.
- Skyrocketing rent is driving homelessness and increasing evictions. A \$100 increase in rent translates to a 9% increase in homelessness.
 - Hartford's homeless population jumped by 13% in 2022, after years of decline.
- Rent caps have strengthened other communities. Predictable increases, as with mortgages, allows for neighborhood stability and fewer transitions.
- Connecticut currently doesn't limit how much landlords can raise rent or let municipalities set rent caps. There is no complaint-based process to address the problem.

Please **support SB 4** with these amendments:

- The cap should be lower – I suggest 3%. This tracks to pre-pandemic average rent increases and would be affordable and predictable to tenants.
- It should cover apartments in between tenants so landlords can't push out tenants to increase the rent.
- It should expand good-cause eviction protections to cover all tenants so they have greater stability in their homes.

Sincerely,

William Marut
Glastonbury, CT